

# Hampden *Highlights*

Quarterly Newsletter, Town of Hampden • Issue 16, July 2009

## *Live from Hampden*

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

Watching ABC 7's 6 p.m. newscast on Thursday, May 14, you no doubt would have recognized pictures of the town, an official being interviewed, an athlete from the Academy, and heard some of the history of Hampden as well. That's because ABC 7 broadcast live from the Town Council chambers as part of its series promoting local towns. "Hampden is our first in the series of live broadcasts because it's within our microwave signal and the facilities offer a great layout," says George Thomas, Operations Manager.

Viewers got to listen to Town Manager Susan Lessard speak on the cost saving measures underway including the new Town Office hours, transfer station changes, health benefit adjustments, and no employee cost of living raises for 2009/2010. Council Mayor Matt Arnett updated viewers on the green projects underway in town. Other stories included an update on the new proposed Hampden Academy, Anglers restaurant and more. Each commercial break was live as well with the Edward's family (grocery store) and the Public Safety Department. ABC 7's sports report had the added attraction of a sea of purple, as the Academy's baseball team was the backdrop. The 10 and 11 p.m. newscasts on Fox- ABC 7 that same evening offered additional stories about the landfill being an energy efficient mountain and a profile of two Town Office pooches.

"We relish the opportunity to show people that Hampden is a great place to live and work," says Mayor Arnett. He goes on, "The Channel VII broadcast team was terrific, they were thoroughly prepared for the broadcast and asked interesting questions that provided valuable information to our residents and to those considering Hampden as a place to live, work, or start a business." ■



FROM THE DESK OF THE MANAGER



Susan Lessard, Town Manager

THE BUDGET

The 2009/2010 budget was approved by the Town Council at a Public Hearing at their regular Council meeting on Monday, June 15. As presented, the municipal budget is nearly \$200,000 lower than the 2008/2009 budget. The school budget appropriation of an additional \$91,000 and the County tax increase of

\$23,000 as well as estimated revenue reductions in excise tax collections and municipal revenue sharing funds from the State have ‘eaten up’ that cushion. However, despite these challenges - I am pleased to note that there will be no mil rate increase associated with this year’s budget.

TAX BILLS

Tax bills for the 2009/2010 year will be mailed in August. The first half is due the first Wednesday in October and the second half is due the first Wednesday in April. The Assessor is still finalizing valuations at this time.

SIGN REMINDERS

Just a reminder to all Hampden residents regarding temporary signs. The Town’s zoning ordinance requires that all signs – including temporary signs such as real estate, no trespassing, yard sale, etc. – be set back 8’ from the road right of way as well as 8’ from the property boundaries. The Town has had complaints regarding the location of such signs, and the Town Council Planning and Development Committee will be discussing this issue at one of their upcoming meetings. In the meantime, if you have such a sign, please make sure that it meets the proper setbacks! Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

MAYOR ARNETT NOMINATED FOR MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mayor Matthew Arnett has been nominated for election to the Maine Municipal Association Executive Committee for a three year term beginning in late 2009. Elections will be held during the summer of 2009. This important post gives both Hampden and the region a voice in policy development for this important state-wide organization. Congratulations Matt!

PUBLIC SAFETY – SAFETY ENHANCEMENT GRANT RECEIVED

Firefighter/paramedic Jason Lundstrom has successfully written another grant for the Fire Department in the amount of \$2,000 for a Scott RIT PAK. This grant is part of a safety incentive grant program through the Maine Municipal Association Risk Management Services. Thanks to Jason for another successful grant!

ROUTE 1A SEWER PROJECT AWARDED

Nearly 9000 feet of new sewer line will be installed over the next three months in the Route 1A North, Patterson Street area. Sargent Corporation will be performing the work. Please be patient with construction-related traffic delays during that time period. The contractor will do everything possible to minimize any traffic impact.

TOWN OFFICE HOURS – HOW ARE THEY WORKING?

We have now had our new town office hours in operation for two months. The 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday schedule has taken some adjustment on the part of both staff and customers! We are pleased to note, however, that many people are taking advantage of the earlier opening time – and even more are transacting business with us in the 4:30 to 6 time period. This change was made in an effort to improve service by extending hours on both ends of the day AND to save money in the upcoming budget.

So – how is it working for you and your family? If you have questions or concerns or want to provide feedback you can go to the Town website at <http://www.hampdenmaine.com> and click on Feedback Form on the left side of the website and send us a message.



WOOD & CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION DEBRIS COLLECTION WEEKENDS

JULY 2009 – JUNE 2010

MONTH	2 <sup>ND</sup> WEEKEND DATES	4 <sup>TH</sup> WEEKEND DATES
JULY 2009	11 <sup>TH</sup> -12 <sup>TH</sup>	25 <sup>TH</sup> -26 <sup>TH</sup>
AUGUST 2009	8 <sup>TH</sup> -9 <sup>TH</sup>	22 <sup>ND</sup> -23 <sup>RD</sup>
SEPTEMBER 2009	12 <sup>TH</sup> -13 <sup>TH</sup>	26 <sup>TH</sup> -27 <sup>TH</sup>
OCTOBER 2009	10 <sup>TH</sup> -11 <sup>TH</sup>	24 <sup>TH</sup> -25 <sup>TH</sup>
NOVEMBER 2009	14 <sup>TH</sup> -15 <sup>TH</sup>	28 <sup>TH</sup> -29 <sup>TH</sup>
DECEMBER 2009	12 <sup>TH</sup> -13 <sup>TH</sup>	26 <sup>TH</sup> -27 <sup>TH</sup>
JANUARY 2010	9 <sup>TH</sup> -10 <sup>TH</sup>	23 <sup>RD</sup> -24 <sup>TH</sup>
FEBRUARY 2010	13 <sup>TH</sup> -14 <sup>TH</sup>	27 <sup>TH</sup> -28 <sup>TH</sup>
MARCH 2010	13 <sup>TH</sup> -14 <sup>TH</sup>	27 <sup>TH</sup> -28 <sup>TH</sup>
APRIL 2010	10 <sup>TH</sup> -11 <sup>TH</sup>	24 <sup>TH</sup> -25 <sup>TH</sup>
MAY 2010	8 <sup>TH</sup> -9 <sup>TH</sup>	22 <sup>ND</sup> -23 <sup>RD</sup>
JUNE 2010	12 <sup>TH</sup> -13 <sup>TH</sup>	26 <sup>TH</sup> -27 <sup>TH</sup>

CURRENT TRANSFER STATION DECAL REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION TO THE FACILITY

\*\*\*REMINDER – IF YOU WISH TO DISPOSE OF AN APPLIANCE CONTAINING A REFRIGERANT, YOU HAVE TO FIRST OBTAIN A STICKER FROM THE TOWN OFFICE. STICKERS ARE \$15 PER APPLIANCE.

COPIES OF THIS SCHEDULE ARE ALSO POSTED ON THE TOWN WEBSITE AT [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com)

**Hampden** *Highlights* is published quarterly by the Town of Hampden, and its success depends upon a community-wide effort. We ask you to please forward news, notes and tips about friends, neighbors, colleagues — or yourselves — to Anne Gabbianelli O'Reilly by emailing: [Anne.OReilly@umit.maine.edu](mailto:Anne.OReilly@umit.maine.edu), drop off at the Town Office, or mailing to *Hampden Highlights*, Town Office, 106 Western Avenue, Hampden , ME, 04444. You can find *Hampden Highlights* on the Web at [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com). We welcome your feedback. Edited by: Anne Gabbianelli O'Reilly, Susan Lessard, and Mark Pierce • Layout and design by Val Williams



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

## Backyard Composting

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

Residents of Hampden are enjoying composting these days by using compost bins that are friendly on many fronts, says Victor Horton of Maine Resource Recovery Association. "The biggest benefit is saving on landfills and incinerators. In everybody's trash there is about 25% food waste, which can be composted."

60 Earth Machine compost bins were sold this spring in town. If you are interested in placing an order for 2010, call Rosemary at 862-4500.

It's suggested you keep the meats and fatty oils out so animals are not drawn to the 80-gallon compost bin. While they can be secured to the ground, some critters can be persistent if the waste is too appetizing. Horton claims using a compost bin is fairly clean and your neighbors won't even know you are composting but your garden will appreciate it. ■

## Spring Clean-up

By Bob Osborne and Shelia Albert



Spring sunshine brightened an early May Saturday as the Town of Hampden, in association with the Bangor Area Stormwater Group, and many volunteers participated in the fourth annual

regional stream cleanup event Saturday, May 9, 2009. Discarded articles were picked up around the banks of the Penobscot River at the Hamlin Marina, along Route 202, Coldbrook Road, Main Road and Papermill Recreation Area.

The event was well attended with some 65 participants in the cleanup. A number of companies and organizations were represented by participants: Anglers Restaurants, Woodard and Curran Engineering, Lane Construction, CARQUEST, Hampden Troop 41, Robert Burke's 8th Grade Reeds Brook students, Hampden Town employees, Conservation Commission, Friends of Dorothea Dix Park, Edwards Shop and Save, Hampden Academy students, and a number of private citizens. Ducky the cleanup duck mascot made an appearance at the event, and Lane Construction and Sunrise Materials provided free regional stream cleanup tee-shirts to all participants. A total of 80 bags of trash were collected and kept from entering into the sparkling waterways of the Bangor area community. The strangest item disposed of was a television and the most common item was litter.

The enthusiastic group was rewarded with a BBQ lunch held by Hampden town officials. The Town and BASWG are most grateful for all of the help with the event for both the volunteers and the following sponsors: Bangor Daily News, Miller Drug, Edwards Family Shop-N-Save, Lane Construction, Sunrise Materials, NH Bragg and Sons, Union Street Athletics and The Grasshopper Shop.

Think Blue, Clean water starts with you. ■



Photos by Sheila Albert

## Memorial Day 2009



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

# SPRUCING UP

By Lance Case

It's summer! You've picked up the fallen branches from the winter, raked even more leaves, and cut the lawn a few times. But is there still something missing? Maybe you're thinking about doing a bit of landscaping? A well-placed tree or shrub *can* make quite a difference. However, it may be a good idea to avoid picking out your new woody plants without considering a few things first.

**The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next time is now**

—Chinese Proverb

While you're working out some ideas about your tree or shrub landscaping project, start with the location. What are the soil conditions like? Does it drain well? Is it compacted or loose? How much sun does the site get? Are there other leaf or needle-bearing trees nearby? Like all plants, trees and shrubs thrive in rich, organic soil, and need plenty of sun and water to grow. Some trees are said to be "shade-tolerant" while others are "shade-intolerant" and some do well in wet soils while others require well-drained soils. Local nurseries will sell trees and shrubs suited to Zone 5, but you will need to know some specifics about the location before you pick out a tree or shrub for it. Other site considerations include proximity to paved surfaces for rooting and salt exposure, utility lines above and below ground and public signage for safety.

The next consideration is how much you have budgeted for the tree or shrub? Trees in particular may be sold as bare root seedlings, sapling-size in

**For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver**

—Martin Luther

various container sizes, or ball and burlapped (B&B) pole-size trees. The standard used at nurseries to determine tree size is to use a caliper size, which is the diameter (in inches) of the trunk at 6 inches above the ground to 4 inch caliper size, then 12 inches above the ground for larger trees. Seedlings may sell for less than a dollar while larger, B&B stock may sell for hundreds of dollars to over a thousand dollars.

Once you've determined the species and size of tree, there are some key indicators to look for that will suggest the future success of the planting. Starting from the canopy, do the leaves appear yellow, wilted, or are there pest insects visible? Do the branches appear crowded, growing less than 45 degrees vertically from the main stem, or are they longer than a quarter of the height of the tree? Does the trunk appear damaged or scarred? If you've answered 'no' to these questions, the tree deserves further consideration. If you are shopping for a containerized tree or shrub, the tree should not be loose in the soil. Avoid trees that have roots visible at the surface of the soil or are growing out of the water holes. You may need the assistance of a person working at the nursery, but tip the tree and slip it out of the container to inspect the roots. If the tree appears root bound, this may lead to "root girdling", where the roots will eventually strangle the tree, and will not

keep the tree stable in the ground. If you are looking for a B&B tree, the tree should be in the center of and firm in the ball. The burlap should be tightly wrapped. It will not be visible until the burlap is removed, but there should be few to no roots larger than an average finger that has been cut. So long as these problems have been avoided, the tree will likely survive the transplant and succeed in its new home.

For more information regarding your tree selection, see the "Right Tree in the Right Place" page of the Arbor Day Foundation's website at: <http://www.arborday.org/trees/rightTreeAndPlace/>

In early June members of the tree board went to several plant nurseries in the area to locate suitable trees for the

**Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world**

—John Muir

Western Avenue Recreation Area tree planting. As the first major project and with grant money provided by Project Canopy, the Tree Board aims to make a good impression on the community. Tree selection was a significant component of the project. Special care and attention was taken to avoid any tree mortality in the park. The Arbor Day Foundation website offers excellent videos on tree planting procedures at this web address: <http://www.arborday.org/trees/video/how-to-plant.cfm> Pruning information can be found here: <http://www.arborday.org/trees/pruning/> ■

## Tree City USA Recognition Award for 2008

By Shelby Wright

For the second year, the Town of Hampden was awarded Tree City USA status from the National Arbor Day Foundation as part of Maine's 2009 Arbor Week Celebration. An

awards ceremony held at the Maine State Museum on May 18 featured Governor John Baldacci and was sponsored by the Department of Conservation, the Maine Forest Service, Project Canopy, and the Pine Tree State Arboretum.

The Tree City USA Award, presented by R. Alec Giffen, Director of the Maine Forest Service and Patrick McGowan, Commissioner of the Department of Conservation, represents a city or town's commitment to a viable tree management plan and program.

Mayor Matthew Arnett and Hampden Tree Board Chairman Jim Feverston accepted the award for Hampden. Also in attendance were Hampden Town Planner Bob Osborne and Tree Board member and myself, Project Canopy Grant Team Leader Shelby Wright.

In celebration of the Award and in recognition of Maine's Arbor Day, the Hampden Tree Board presented Spruce Trees and Arbor Day 2009 badges to town officials and planted a Star Magnolia Tree by the town office. ■



Left to right are: Shelby Wright and her daughter Marion Glinski, Phil Stack, Lance Case, Chris Packard, Bob Osborn, and Jim Feverston  
Photo Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Mayor Arnett, Shelby Wright, Hampden Tree Board member and Maine Forest Service Director R. Alec Giffen, Hampden Town Planner Bob Osbourne, Hampden Tree City USA Chair Jim Feverston together with Maine Project Canopy Director Jan Santerre

## Project Canopy Grant Keeps Hampden On the Grow!

By Shelby Wright and Jim Feverston  
of Hampden's Tree Board

If you've driven by the recreation area across from the Lura Hoit Memorial Pool lately, you've probably noticed some changes in the local landscape.

Thanks to the hard work of citizen volunteers, town staff and supporting businesses, the Hampden Tree Board was able to plant approximately 50 native trees and shrubs in the park area adjacent to the Lura Hoit Memorial Pool providing shade and beautification to the park.

The "Western Avenue Recreation Area Planting Project" was made possible through a competitive grant awarded to the Town of Hampden-Hampden Tree Board from the Maine Forest Service, the USDA Community and Urban Forestry Program and Maine Project Canopy.

"Hampden's Tree Board has done an outstanding job in following up on the Town's designation as a member community in Tree City USA," said Mayor Matt Arnett. "The successful grant application to Project Canopy (just under \$7,000) will bring shade, color, and serenity to adults and children who use the play area adjacent to the Lura Hoit Pool for many years to come."

Through this project, we were able to plant many trees and shrubs, but the true success is really about the people that made it happen. Thank you to our many community partners who helped make the project a success!

Three distinct characteristics define the underlying success of this project: 1) the support of the Town Council, 2) a solid core of motivated and dedicated community volunteers and town staff, and 3) a strong commitment to long term planning and teamwork necessary to accomplish a shared vision for the community.

The first major project of its nature for the Hampden Tree Board, the new trees and shrubs provide a highly visible addition to the community and represent one of the final stages of a town project with the goal of creating a welcoming and aesthetically enhanced community park near the center of town for residents and visitors alike.

Enjoy from the Hampden Tree Board:

Lance Case, Jim Feverston, Chris Packard, Phil Stack and Shelby Wright and the Hampden Project Canopy Grant Team—Teamleader Shelby Wright, Volunteer Coordinator Jane Jarvi and Nancy Chiayabhat. ■

## VISIT [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com) FOR IMPORTANT TOWN INFORMATION

**H**ave you visited [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com) lately? Town staff continually updates the website to keep our residents informed about the latest happenings in town government. On the front page you will find the latest news and information, town office hours and staff contact information, a community calendar, and links to state websites to re-register automobiles, recreational vehicles and to purchase hunting and fishing licenses.

Within the pages of our site, you can view information about town departments, town events, agendas and minutes for town boards and committees, current town ordinances, public notices and numerous other items. You will find links to state government, SAD #22 schools, the Water District and other local and state organizations. The most recent addition to the Recreation Department's page is notification of program cancellations due to weather conditions.

Access to the World Wide Web is available 24/7 and with the recent change in town office hours, we encourage residents to visit the town's website to re-register your vehicle, ATV or snowmobile, or purchase a hunting/fishing license during those hours that the town office is closed.

Do you want to be notified of Town Council or Planning Board meetings or hear about news that is happening in the community? If so, sign up to receive email notifications of meetings, projects and news by entering your email address under the E-mail Sign Up section. You will receive periodic updates of what's happening in town. ■



Photos by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

## The Spirit of Soccer: Remembering Nate

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

**T**he torrential rains of Friday evening, June 19 didn't dampen the spirit-filled kick off of the first Annual Nathan D. Clark Memorial Soccer Tournament. "It was like a monsoon," says Bill Burke, "Yet, we still had 50 playing the alumni game." Burke gladly accepted the role of assisting a few students in their desire to remember Nate, their classmate, who tragically lost his life in March. Emily Robson remembers Nate for his passion for soccer. "His aggressiveness, skills and character on the field inspired many of his team members to work harder, strive for excellence and above all win as a team," she read at the start of the tournament. Danny Clark, Nate's dad, stood in the crowd watching his son Ben on the field recalling the endless games he watched Nate play as well. "It's nice to see the old faces of soccer and the new faces of soccer." Teams came from as far away as Presque Isle and Readfield totaling 16 boys teams and 4 girls teams all in memory of Nate. "The students in our community have seen five deaths in their short lifetimes, and we needed to take the tragedy and turn it into the positive." Clark was moved by the weekend events, "This is such a tribute and to think the students organized this," he pondered while holding a freshly signed soccer ball from the Sebasticook Valley Middle School Soccer Team. ■

## Library News



### BE A STAR @ YOUR LIBRARY!

Preschoolers through highschoolers are the stars at the Edythe Dyer Library this summer! The library is decorated with Hollywood and Broadway street signs, actual stars and soon we'll have life-size figures of storybook fame—Dorothy and Toto, Harry Potter and Dora the Explorer. Be sure to stop in for prizes, fun and weekly special programs. Questions? Call the library at 862-3550

### TELEPHONE BOOK ERROR

If you reach the library when you were expecting to call the town office, you're not alone. The first listing for "Hampden Town of" in the 2009-2010 FairPoint Communications telephone book lists the library telephone number. The library staff is happy to talk with you and give you the correct telephone number (862-3034). What better place to call for information than the library?

## The Broncosaurus is Coming!

By Dan Brooks and Cedena McAvoy



Photo by Cedena McAvoy

**A** new dinosaur species has been discovered in Hampden! Thought to be the first fossil evidence of a baby broncosaurus, this is a water-loving four-legged creature. Experts have assured town officials that the new discovery is unlike anything ever uncovered before. Standing about 4 feet tall and stretching to a length of 6 feet, the baby broncosaurus is covered in purple skin with white spots. Its head is large and sports a smile from ear to ear. Its long tail appears to have been specifically designed for toddler/preschool children to slide on. Currently the fossil is being prepared for permanent display at the Lura Hoit Pool. This facility was chosen as the exhibition home because of its size and stature. The broncosaurus should feel right at home near the water with little ones sliding down its tail and crawling on its back, replacing the sea-shell slide.

Also there's a change of hours due to current economic conditions. The pool is closed on Sundays through August 23, 2009. Darcey Peakall, pool director, explains, "In an effort to reduce overhead and staffing costs without reducing programming during high use hours, we have made this decision."

Despite the economy, the annual patron use at the pool for 2008 was 34,739. This is approximately 4,000 more patrons than in 2007. Please check out the town of Hampden's web site, [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com), town departments, Lura Hoit Pool, for current schedules and more information. ■

# Children's Day Celebrating 30 YEARS!

By Don Darling

August 15, 2009 is a milestone for our annual celebration of children and family. That date is the 30th anniversary of Hampden Children's Day. The modest event combining two separate activities, and organized by members of the Hampden Kiwanis and the Hampden Public Safety Association, has prospered over the past three decades thanks to the foundation laid by Ed Murphy, Bob Bailey, Russ Ritchie, and many others back in 1978.

The Hampden Children's Day Committee transitioned from meetings packed with dozens of volunteers to a much more modest assemblage. Throughout the years a number of persons work quite anonymously towards the success of the event. Joe Porter comes to mind. For more than 25 years Joe (with help from Bob Burke) took care of the PA system. No one need call, Joe just did it! Galen Deprey of H O Bouchard takes time out from his many work and family obligations to help set up the parade. Rick Briggs worked on the fireworks as a volunteer more than 20 years ago and supports us still as co-owner of Blue Hill Pyrotechnics. The Town of Hampden, the Hampden Public Works Department and Hampden Public Safety come together at the right time, and make it all work. We've much to be grateful for.

The Hampden Recreation Department is the umbrella under which the Children's Day Committee functions. Kurt Mathies brings great energy and resourcefulness to Committee meetings.

Then there is the support of Hampden area businesses. We've enjoyed unquestioned support over the years. Little could be accomplished without the help of our friends and neighbors who run the many shops and establishments in town.

Lastly, there are the people who've given their time to prepare and run the event over the years. Over the last six years or so, the number of committee members is quite small. This is a dedicated group, and we should thank them for their time and effort.

The 2009 Hampden Children's Day should be quite an event. We will have the truck display again, and it should be much bigger than last year. The popular horse and carriage ride will be back. We have jugglers, and our good friend Zack Field will entertain. We have Kayla Wass to provide music and share her splendid voice. For the first time we will have a rabbit exhibit where the young folks can see and hold one of the many breeds of these critters. We've got the bounce house and several groups will be on the grounds of SAD 22, including the Maine Discovery Museum, the Maine National Guard, and CHIPs. The day will start at 11:00 in the morning with our parade. The events on the grounds will start at noon. The day will conclude with the regions best fireworks show, thanks to Rick, Ed and the volunteers from Blue Hill Pyrotechnics crew.

Then there is the food. The Hampden Kiwanis will have their Lunch Wagon on the grounds. The Hampden Children's Day French fries and dough boys (thanks to 20 year committee member John Alley), Children's Day lemonade, the VFW Auxiliary sandwiches and strawberry short cake, and Jakki's chicken and ribs. We'll have cotton candy and other treats to take care of your taste buds.

Most of the activities are free or we ask a very modest fee. This event is about having a good time at little or no cost to you.

This year's event is a milestone event for another reason. Due to the construction of the new high school, our ability to shoot the fireworks on the SAD 22 grounds may be at an end. This is not to say we'll not have fireworks again, but where they happen will be the big topic for the 2010 Children's Day Committee. Speaking of 2010, we are looking for a few of you good folks to help us out next year. Where the 31st Hampden Children's Day is held is a big issue, and your help will be appreciated. We'll have sign up sheets at the information booth, and if you would like to spend some time shaping the 31st Hampden Children's Day we'd be delighted to have you join us!

See you Saturday, August 15, 2009 for the 30th Hampden Children's Day!

## HAMPDEN HISTORICAL GEM OF A HOUSE

By Chip Mattson

Did you know that there is a place right here in Hampden that is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, contains a museum full of War of 1812 artifacts (like guns, swords, sunken-ship fragments and cannon balls), and is furnished with period furniture (some original, others restored)? A few original floors remain as do windows and doors. The grounds outside sport flowers and trees similar to those cultivated when this house, still located on what is now Main Road South, was built in 1794.

This is Kinsley House. The original 1794 part was built by Reuben Newcomb. About 1800 the house was purchased by Martin Kinsley who added the front portion of the house. Kinsley was born in 1754 in Bridgewater, Massachusetts and studied medicine at Harvard College. He served in the Revolutionary War and became known as Major Kinsley.

During the War of 1812, the Battle of Hampden was fought in September, 1814 when the British fleet sailed up the Penobscot River and disembarked troops who marched up what is now Route 1A toward Bangor and dispersed the local militia. Later some British officers spied Kinsley's gracious home and needing a headquarters began to pound on the front door demanding admittance. Mrs. Kinsley opened the door, saw the officers and slammed the door in their faces (Historical Sketches; Hampden Maine, 1767-1976, p. 20).

When the enraged officers began to beat the door down with their swords and threaten to burn down the house and everyone in it, Mrs. Kinsley decided to take action. She opened the upstairs windows and poured the contents of several full chamber pots down upon the immaculately uniformed officers. The stunned officers immediately departed the premises. Neither Mrs. Kinsley nor her family was disturbed again during the British stay. However, before leaving, one of the officers was heard to remark that if Mrs. Kinsley had commanded the local militia, Hampden would have



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

been celebrating a victory instead of suffering defeat. (Historical Sketches; Hampden Maine, 1767-1976, p. 146).

Martin Kinsley served as a Circuit Court Judge, Justice of the Peace, Post Master and U.S. Senator. He died at Roxbury, Massachusetts in June 1835. After 1900, Kinsley House was used as a wayside stop for travelers and as a birthing home.

But there is another side to Kinsley House, and that is what Hampden Historical Society members do today within the house and the local community. They help folks who come from all over the U.S. and many foreign countries to use the Society's archives. Some guide school children on a day trip. Maybe it is advising Girl and Boy Scouts seeking information required to obtain a particular badge.

Also, it is not just Kinsley House of interest, but its barn with a summer kitchen and tool shed, its well kept grounds and the Hannibal Hamlin law office. Hamlin was President Abraham's first Vice President who practiced law and lived in Hampden for many years. His law office was discovered during a construction project and removed to Kinsley House's grounds where it is open to the public on certain days.

In 1992, the Society received a national award from the American Association of State and Local History for its contribution to local history by volunteer organizations. In 2008, the Society was chosen by the Maine Historical Society to participate in the Maine Community Heritage Project; that is, learning how to digitize our archives so they will last for many years.

Come join the Hampden Historical Society help preserve Hampden's history by calling the Kinsley House at 862-2027 or visiting [www.rootsweb.com/~mehhsl](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mehhsl)

Open: Tuesdays, 10 – 4 p.m. from April through October or by appointment. The Hampden Historical Society meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Kinsley House, 83 Main Road South.

# Hampden’s New Rain Garden

Volunteers from many organizations dug in to help create Hampden's new Rain Garden



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



TOWN OF HAMPDEN  
106 WESTERN AVENUE  
HAMPDEN, ME 04444

PERMIT NO. 201

POSTAL PATRON  
HAMPDEN, ME 04444